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[Images available upon request.]

Denver Art Museum and The Phoebus Foundation present *Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools: 300 Years of Flemish Masterworks* in Fall 2022

*Renowned collection of 15th- to 17th-century Flemish works
highlights new ways artists depicted their rapidly changing world
through unique styles and storytelling*



DENVER — June 7, 2022 — The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is proud to collaborate with The Phoebus Foundation to present *Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools: 300 Years of Flemish Masterworks*, opening at the Denver Art Museum for the collection's U.S. debut in fall 2022. The exhibition will introduce U.S. audiences for the first time to the Belgium-based Phoebus Foundation's comprehensive 15th- to 17th-century Flemish art collection, including masterpieces by, among many others, Hans Memling, Jan Gossaert, Jan and Catharina van Hemessen, Peter Paul Rubens, Jacob Jordaens and Anthony van Dyck.

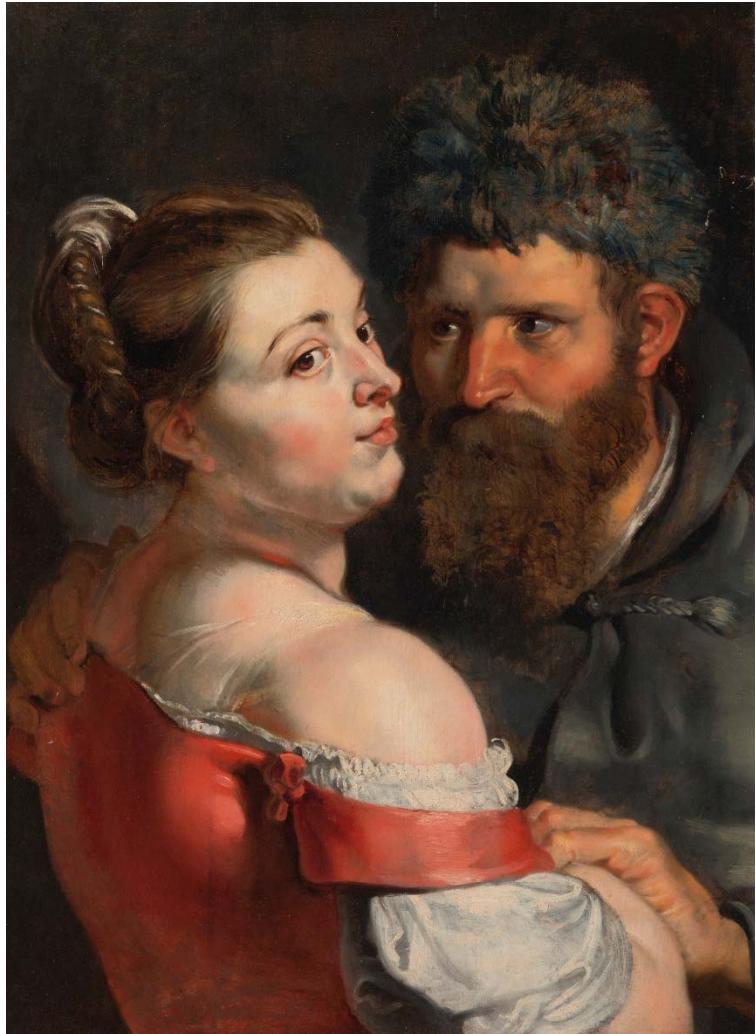
Displayed in the Anschutz and Martin & McCormick galleries on level 2 of the Hamilton Building, *Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools* will be on view from Oct. 16, 2022, through Jan. 22, 2023, with ticketed admission. This unique presentation of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque paintings, sculptures and other objects from the Southern Netherlands is overseen

by Foundation Chief of Staff and Curator Dr. Katharina Van Cauteren and Project Coordinator Niels Schalley and curated for the DAM by Chief Curator and Curator of European Art before 1900 Angelica Daneo.

"This incredible collection of masterpieces is coming to the U.S. for the first time," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "Engaging visitors of all ages in these works is a top priority, and guests will experience the unexpected in the art installation and immersive gallery experiences we hope will create parallels between the social history of 15th- to 17th-century Flanders and our world today."

At the DAM, Curator Angelica Daneo and Interpretive Specialist Lauren Thompson have created curatorial and interpretive narratives for the Denver presentation that draw from thematic directions developed by Van Cauteren to guide visitors.

"Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools offers a look into the specific subjects and styles adopted by artists in the Southern Netherlands between the 15th and 17th centuries, providing important connections



to the society and culture of the time," Daneo said. "We hope visitors will gain insight into the development of styles, subjects and techniques through these three crucial centuries and have fun as they explore the unique design and approach of the exhibition."

Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools progresses through six sections, starting with "God is in the Details," introducing religious subjects as a principal focus for the artists of the time. Works including Hans Memling's Birth of Christ and Pieter Coecke van Aelst's triptych showcase the extraordinary attention to details and devotional imagery artists and patrons favored at the time. Holy figures were now presented as flesh-and-blood human beings in familiar, contemporary settings.

The following section titled "From God to the Individual" aims to show the rise of individual awareness and confidence, resulting in the creation of ambitious portraits celebrating the sitters' wealth and status in society.

It is appropriately followed by a grouping dedicated to the theme of human folly; the section titled "The Fool in the Mirror" presents images and compositions popular at the time: whimsical, sarcastic and, at the same time, poignant in their critique of human presumptuousness. These scenes, often hilarious, full of jokes, pranks and witty double meanings, were meant to shine a light on the greed, lust and other follies of human life and, ultimately, discourage from a sinful existence.



The section "The Discovery of the World," centers on the belief, embraced by Flemings at the time, that to understand the mysteries of the divine, one had to explore the wider world. Every detail of creation deserved to be examined, smelled, described, and studied and, therefore, countless scientific disciplines developed. Southern Netherlandish artists responded to these developments, incorporating new discoveries into their technique and subject matter. Nature became a playground for ever-more curious scientists, who developed microscopes and telescopes, compasses and quadrants, as well as for artists, who found in it endless motifs for their subjects.

In "A World in Turmoil," the historic background of the Eighty Years War (1568-1648), the conflict between the Netherlands and Spain, will help our visitors understand the reasons behind the adoption, by artists such as Rubens and Van Dyck, of an emotional approach to painting, where religious scenes were meant to move and overwhelm the viewer, thus securing allegiance to the Catholic faith, embraced by the Spanish rulers.

The final section, titled "The Pursuit of Wonder," intends to recreate a "Wunderkammer," or "Room of Wonders:" Shells, corals, rare animals, scientific instruments and precious gems, fashionable art and rare antiquities: collectors sought to gather and organize these "curiosities" as objects representative of the known world, as well as the unknown, proving their success and showing off their newly achieved status. These objects will be presented as an immersive experience, which is also the culmination of the visitors' journey through the exhibition. The display of the Wunderkammer benefited from a collaboration with the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, who generously lent natural objects from their collections.



Saints, Sinners, Lovers, and Fools: 300 Years of Flemish Masterworks is co-organized by the Denver Art Museum and The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp (Belgium). It is presented by the Birnbaum Social Discourse Project. Support is provided by the Tom Taplin Jr. and Ted Taplin Endowment, Keith and Kathie Finger, the Kristin and Charles Lohmiller Exhibitions Fund, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Christie's, the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS4.

Saints, Sinners, Lovers and Fools will travel to

the Dallas Museum of Art and will be on view from February 19 to June 25, 2023.

Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under, regardless of residency, receive free general

admission everyday thanks to the museum's Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

COVID-19 Protocols

The safety of visitors and staff remains a top priority, and the museum is continually updating its COVID-19 safety and security protocols based on advice from the CDC and federal and local guidelines. Current protocols can be found in the "Visit" section of the museum's website. denverartmuseum.org/visit

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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Image Credits:

Image 1: Hans Memling and Workshop, *The Nativity*, about 1480. Oil paint on panel; 44- 3/8 × 34-1/8 in. © The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp.

Image 2: Peter Paul Rubens, *A Sailor and a Woman Embracing*, about 1615–18. Oil paint on panel; 39-3/8 × 31-1/4 in. © The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp.

Image 3: Jan Massys, *Rebus: The World Feeds Many Fools*, about 1530. Oil paint on panel; 20-1/4 × 24-3/8 in. © The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp.

Image 4: Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of Prince William II of Orange as a Child*, about 1631. Oil paint on canvas; 56-3/4 × 47-1/8 in. © The Phoebus Foundation, Antwerp.

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Revised September 2022